



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

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Last Call for Fleet Mapping Training!

By E. Wing O'Spooner espooner@mt.gov

Four slots are open for the fleet mapping work session on March 17-19 at the Hill County Detention Center, 1450 2nd St. W., in Havre. Interested? Just contact Curt Petrik TODAY at (406) 765-2970 or via Email at: cpetrik@co.sheridan.mt.us.

Brian Sewell Joins the IM Project

By Dan O' Sullivan dsullivan@mt.gov



Brian Sewell is the newest staffer to join the Interoperability Montana (IM) team. He started work this week as a Project Manager. Brian has 16 years of telecommunications and project management experience in Montana, having worked for several local engineering firms. Perhaps most notably, Brian worked with the 1994-1996 statewide Vision Net system start-up.

Brian holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and is a registered professional engineer. He lives in Helena with his wife, Shaula, and two children. Brian is looking forward to the challenges of this project and to working with everyone involved. Here is his contact information:



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IM Finance Committee Meeting

By E. Wing O'Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana (IM) Finance Committee met in Helena on Mon., March 9. Members discussed FY05 DHS grant monies and noted that considerable progress has been made in closing out contracts and reducing the balance. An extension request for remaining funds is to be sent this week, and is expected to be the last one for these funds.

Bill Fleiner, IM Finance Officer, reported that a three-part request for FY09 DHS grant funds was submitted for two TrESAPS, a planner, and infrastructure build out. A working committee reviewed all requests and eliminated one of the TrESAPS. The rest of the projects were approved and an award is expected in July. Peggy Glass, Park County, provided documentation on monies that will be reverted back to the IM from the original Myer's Flat site allocation. Bill reported that plans are in the works to prepare a FY10 annual budget.

Kevin Bruski, IM, reported on the number of radios jurisdictions have that require trunking upgrades and the need to address this expense in the budget. He also indicated that the agreement with the Montana National Guard needs to be signed ASAP, but some logistics still are being resolved.

The committee approved three Decision/Information Requests (DIRs), including one to purchase MUX equipment for the Windy Hill site in Roosevelt County, another to specifically allocate FY08 DHS funds for the

installation of a MCC7500 Dispatch Console in Gallatin County, and a third to obtain a frequency to correct an interference problem at the Timberline site.

Kevin also reported that the build-out schedule using PSIC grant funds is still dependent on a positive resolution of the NEPA issue. All Statement of Work (SOWs) for the southwest loop are ready to be submitted to the contractor for bidding. The IM also plans to start tracking four categories of PSIC grant match money, i.e. state, federal, local and soft. The new DES representative to the IM, Amy Maracle, will be investigating a revision to the PSIC award letter, a clarification on eligible matching contributions, and a means to include match invoices from previous quarters.

Scott Bradford, PSSB, reported that he is sending out letters to COPS Grant radio recipients to transfer ownership to local entities. An Executive Committee conference call is planned to approve a possible recommendation to match up to 50% of a county or jurisdiction's Assistance to Firefighters Grant requests for interoperable communications equipment. Flathead and Sweet Grass Counties as well as the Eastern Tier Consortium are submitting grant requests this year.

The next IM Finance Committee meeting is set for Monday, April 13, from 9:00 am to noon at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ), 828 Great Northern Blvd. in Helena.

IM Governance Committee Meeting

By E. Wing O'Spooner espooner@mt.gov



The Interoperability Montana Governance Committee (IMGC) met in Helena on Monday, March 9. Flathead County Commissioner and IMPD 1st Vice Chair, Joe Brenneman, was introduced as a new committee voting member to replace Cindy Mullaney from Flathead County.

After a review of progress on task items, sub-committee reports were heard. Cheri Kilby has received the most recent bylaws materials, and will be addressing needed revisions soon. Bob Murdo, legal counsel, gave an update on the Wirth Ranch lease agreement, and Bill Fleiner reported on the need for an IM Communication Director and Public Information Officer contract position and the importance of updating flyers and other outreach and education materials.

Members also discussed training opportunities for members of the board as well as the upcoming fleet mapping training session in Havre. The Office of Emergency Communications will be providing a one-day training session on implementation of the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP), and three dates will be proposed for their trainers to present in Helena. Irene Bushnell, Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ), provided information on AZ's Blueprint for Excellence training program that provides a template for successful planning and accountability.



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Members talked about methods for facilitating more input on the Sustainability Plan as well as ways to better inform opinion leaders on the logic and need for the IM system. Members also received an update on the status of House Bill 10. Executive action has not yet been taken. At this point, it does not appear that the IM Project will be receiving a portion of the stimulus money.

The next IMGC will be Monday, April 13 starting at 1:00 pm at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ), 828 Great Northern Blvd., in Helena.

IM Project Directors Meeting

By. E. Wing O'Spooner espooner@mt.gov



The Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) held its monthly meeting in Helena on Tues., March 10. The meeting began with a presentation by Will Soller, Legislative Audit Division, on the results of the Legislative Performance Audit.

Kevin Bruski, IM Executive Director, gave his monthly update and said the Harris-Stratex microwave system along the Northern Tier has been running error free for about a month, and the ProVision monitoring software has been installed. Kevin introduced Brian Sewell, a newly hired IM Project Manager. He also reported that the Montana Highway Patrol has donated a vehicle to use for hauling the snow cat, which is getting a lot of use. He reported on the status of several agreements. Committee reports were heard and accepted, and the IMPD approved three DIRs as well as funding for the Wirth Ranch agreement.

Bill Fleiner reported that PSSB staffers submitted an appropriations request for the IM Project to Senator Tester's office in the amount of \$3.2 million. Members listened to a presentation on Anderson ZurMuehlen's (AZ) Blueprint for Excellence training program and were updated on next week's fleet mapping work session.

Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, provided an update on trunking, and Mark Canton, Motorola, gave a presentation on the Second Master Controller and software upgrades. Bob McWilliams, IMTC Chair, reported on recent IM Technical Committee activities and decisions. George Gupton, Staffing Sub-Committee Chair, announced a meeting on March 23 immediately following the IMTC. He also reported on logistics for the upcoming HAZMAT conference and IM booth.

The next IMPD meeting will be Tues., April 14 at the Montana Association of Counties (MACo) offices, 2715 Skyview Drive, in Helena.



South Central Consortium Meeting

By. E. Wing O'Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The South Central Montana Consortium (SCMICC) met in Big Timber on Wed., March 11. Board Chair Peggy Glass began the meeting with county status reports. Steve Digiovanna, Madison County, discussed power easement issues on the VC Pass site. Frank

Smith, Gallatin County, reported on the recent explosion in Bozeman, and said that county-wide fire service agencies did an excellent job of responding to the incident. Everyone was able to talk to each other and they worked well together, demonstrating strong pre-planning, training and exercising. He also said that the dispatchers did a great job. An after-action briefing has not yet been scheduled. Frank also reported on plans for remote monitoring and alarms, paging problems in Big Sky, and radio interference on public safety radio channels possibly due to a malfunctioning microphone in someone's vehicle. The 9-1-1 center re-location project is taking a lot of his time, too.

Sheriff Rick Seidlitz said that Meagher County is soliciting bids to move a repeater to Grassy Mountain. He is also meeting soon with CenturyTel for a demonstration. Project Director Kerry O'Connell reported for Sweet Grass County, and said that propagation studies and microwave path studies are being performed on possible site locations within the county. Kerry also gave a detailed report on the last IM Project Directors, Governance and Technical Committee meetings.

Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, provided the history behind the need for the Mobile Data Needs Assessment, and reviewed the questionnaire.

The next SCMIC meeting will be held at 10:00 am on Wed., April 11 at the Sheriff's Office Training Center, 123 West Crawford, in White Sulphur Springs.

Upcoming Meetings

March 17

Western Consortium (WICC)

Polson • Lunch during the 17th Annual Hazmat Conference for Indian Nations, KwaTaqNuk Resort, US Highway 93

March 23

IM Technical Committee

Helena • 9:00 am-3:00 pm

MACo Lrg. Conf. Rm., Lower Level; 2715 Skyway Dr.

IM Staffing Sub-Committee

Helena • 3:00-5:00 pm

MACo Lrg. Conf. Rm., Lower Level; 2715 Skyway Dr.

March 25

Tri-County Consortium

Helena • 10:00 am

Dept. of Corrections Annex, behind 515 N. Sanders

March 25

Eastern Tier (ETIC)

Glendive • 10:00 am

Dawson County Courthouse Com. Rm. • 207 W. Bell

March 26

Big Sky 11 Consortium

Billings • Technical Committee: 8:30 -10:00 am

• Consortium: 10:00 am – noon

Billings Fire Station #1/EOC - 2300 9th Ave N.

March 26

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium

Butte • 10:00 am

Butte-Silver Bow Chamber • 1000 George St.